

12 November 1945

MEMORANDUM TO ACCOMPANY TRIAL BRIEF
vs. Defendant Erich Raeder

The purpose of this memorandum is to point out the weaknesses in the case against Erich Raeder and anticipate the defenses available to him.

1. Building the German Navy

Raeder will contend it was his duty to build as strong a Navy as possible, under treaty limitations, and Germany did not violate the treaties. We do not have copies of the Anglo German Naval Treaties (1935 and 1937). We do have documents (Q-166, Q-154, Q-165, Q-196) showing the size of the German Navy.

2. Making Aggressive War

a. Raeder may argue that the invasion of Norway (p.4 of brief) was a defensive measure in the war against England, anticipating English maneuvers to obtain Norwegian bases for the British fleet and Royal Air Force.

b. Raeder may claim that the sinking of neutral merchant shipping, especially Greek ships (p.5 of brief), was a part of the intensification of submarine warfare. It was forced on Germany by neutral ships radioing the positions of U-boats, and by the strength of the allied air forces. It was condoned by the U. S. when President Roosevelt declared the waters around England a blockade zone prohibited to U. S. shipping.

c. Raeder can point out his opposition to the attack on USSR (p.5 of brief), and the extinction of St. Petersburg (p.6 of brief). The documents cited show that Raeder argued with Hitler to postpone the attack on USSR until England had been defeated, and to spare the harbor facilities of St. Petersburg. May I point out that the name St. Petersburg was changed to Leningrad after the last war.

d. Raeder can claim that the trespassing on Swedish waters and the contemplated mining of Turkish waters (p.6 of brief) were only anticipatory orders to counteract possible British activity in those regions. We have no evidence that these orders were executed.

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3. Murder of Prisoners of War

The Hitler decrees of October 1942 to murder captured saboteurs and commandos (p.7 of brief), Raeder may argue, caused Raeder to resign in January 1943. There is evidence in C-178 (see p.6 of brief vs. Doenitz) that the Navy had not been complying with this order, and only 13 days after Doenitz succeeded Raeder, he ordered compliance.

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